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Media Contacts:

Raania Mohsen, Cities Association of Santa Clara County
(408) 730-7770
executive_director@citiesassociation.org

Ragan Henningar, Office of Council Member Sam Liccardo
(408) 535-4903
Ragan.henningar@sanjoseca.gov

CITIES ASSOCIATION OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY IDENTIFIES PRIORITIES FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATION IN 2012

After significant deliberation, the mayors and councilmembers of the Cities Association of Santa Clara County adopted their 2012 set of regional priorities at their January meeting. The workplan in 2012 will focus primarily in three areas, focused on regional economic development, drafting a regional policy for integrating transportation and land use decisions, and supporting innovative schools.

Regarding the first priority, Cities Association President and San Jose City Councilmember Sam Liccardo observed that, “Although each of our cities engage in economic development, including company attraction and retention efforts, no coordinated strategy has emerged for promoting Silicon Valley as a region to the rest of the country and the world.” This effort represents a desire to overcome the potentially destructive impacts of conflicting ambitions among the individual cities and towns, to promote Santa Clara County in a manner that other regions, such as the Research Triangle and Massachusetts’ 128 high-technology corridor, have succeeded in presenting a unified strategy for their economic development. “Other regions in this country and world are working together,” noted Liccardo, “and for too long, Silicon Valley has ‘gotten by’ by resting on the laurels of its extraordinary companies, but the stakes are rising as we see competition not just from the Research Triangle, but from the Yangtze River Delta or Guangdong. We need to collaborate to better compete.”

With the proposed adoption of a Sustainable Communities Strategy in Santa Clara County, substantial debate will emerge about the role of land use planning and its connection to regional transportation funding. Since the decision-making authority over land use and housing lies within each of the individual 15 cities and towns of Santa Clara County, the Cities Association will engage in the discussion with the Valley Transportation Authority, the Association of Bay Area Governments, and other regional



agencies to ensure that an equitable and effective policy emerges for coordinating the development of transportation infrastructure, housing, and jobs.

Finally, charter schools and other innovative educational models often struggle with conflicting land-use regulations between cities and the State of California, and cities can do much to facilitate the development of innovative schools within their boundaries. Recognizing the regional impact of promoting high-achievement public schools, the Cities Association will draft a proposal for cities to consider to enable charter schools and other innovative models to scale to a wider impact throughout the South Bay.

About the Cities Association of Santa Clara County

The Cities Association of Santa Clara County is a regional organization founded in 1990, representing the mutual interests of the County's fifteen cities and towns with a unified voice to government, industry, and the public, and promoting collaboration among the diverse communities to promote the quality of life for all of Santa Clara County's residents. The Board of Directors of the Cities Association consists of the mayors of each of the 15 cities and towns, or of their designee councilmembers. Their monthly meetings are open to the public, and the next scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, February 9th, at 7:00 pm at Sunnyvale City Hall. More information about their meetings, initiatives, and schedules can be found at <http://citiesassociation.org/>.